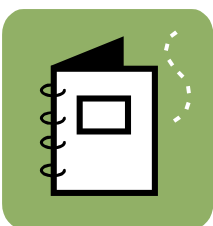**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT**
FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

SEGMENT #1: WHY STANDARDS?

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Virginia Commonwealth University

The Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Richmond, Virginia

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR
NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

A project administered by

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L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
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Professional Development Toolkit for
New and Beginning Teachers

The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS is a research-based video streamed program with accompanying resource documents. The program is an outgrowth of a previous Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) online mentoring study at Virginia Commonwealth University. The findings of the online mentoring study revealed twelve topics new and beginning teachers felt additional university training would have led them to more effective use of best practices in the classroom. In this program, each of the twelve topics is presented in two to six stand alone video segments. The total number of segments is forty five. Suggested uses, in addition to personal viewing by K-12 teachers for self improvement, include professional development, mentor and mentee, university prospective teacher, and small or large group training.

The facilitators are university faculty and practitioners with field experience. Each is currently involved in teacher training or serves as a staff development administrator. All are currently engaged in educational research, teaching and/or educational policy development.

The teachers in the video programs are classroom teachers. Some of them were participants in the 2006 Online Mentoring Study in which the topics for this project were identified. They represent all disciplines in K-12 grades.

Resource documents for the programs are provided as PDF files to facilitate the use of the 45 video segments. The first set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) an introduction to program facilitators, including a definition of each topic, and a list of the video segments, and (3) a research formative study summary that helped to guide the project's development. The second set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) a full text transcript for each video segment, (3) a set of problems and solutions related to each video segment in the form of a work-study guide, and (4) an annotated bibliographic summary of references and Internet links for each transcript. Many of the organizations and agencies referenced in the transcripts are actively involved in the development of video and professional development presentations that support policy and advocacy.

Every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information. Internet content, however, does appear, disappear and change over time. CEPI, as a university-based educational policy research institute endorses no specific position of any listed group.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

SEGMENT #1: WHY STANDARDS?

🗁 VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT

Standards of Learning (SOL): Knowledge of skills and abilities required to master state and local school K-12 curriculum standards.

Facilitator: Dr. Bill Bosher, Jr. Distinguished Professor
Educational and Government Leadership and School Improvement
Virginia Commonwealth University

AUDIO	VIDEO
"All states and schools will have challenging and clear standards of achievement and accountability for all children and efficient strategies for reaching those standards". That statement was released several years ago by the U.S. Department of Education. Shortly thereafter, National education organizations, state departments of education and schools responded, and they continue to respond to that challenge. I am Bill Bosher, Executive Director of the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute and Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and Education. Why do we have standards? The California Board of Education developed content standards "to encourage the highest achievement of every student by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level". The Virginia Department of Education developed Standards of Learning to outline the goals and objectives for each subject taught at each grade level. The goals and objectives are measured by student performance on state-mandated Standards of Learning tests. In addition, some school divisions have enhanced State standards by providing local curriculum objectives, lesson plans, pacing guides, and parent information. State-after-state has joined Virginia and California with the development of standards for content areas and grades; and has incorporated them in accreditation standards and in school improvement plans. While there have been great debates at all levels in education as standards have been developed, history shows that, in many fields outside education, revolutionary change did not take place until there was widespread adoption of standards. In education, at the school district level, studies reveal that: 1. Standards allow for interchangeable content. Content can be used, reused, assembled, and disassembled across levels and locations. 2. Standards ensure that a child does not get trapped academically in a track or in a program offered by a specific school.	DR. BOSHER

3. Standards help ensure that investments are wise and resistant to risk.

4. Assessment, support materials, and training that accompany standards assist teachers in understanding what each child should know and be able to do.

5. Standards help parents and community leaders know what the child is expected to learn at school and how he or she performed on standards tests.

6. Knowledge of test performance provides insight into a need for parent support, remediation, tutoring, and other instructional support services.

Knowledge also may help provide for continuity in community tutoring programs. There are other factors in the education process that may be addressed as an integral part of standards implementation. According to a U.S. Department of Education 2003-2004 School and Staffing Survey, in Virginia for example, only 52 % of mathematics and 74% of science teachers have majors in their assigned fields. Standards and related training may be a major teaching resource and reference for teachers working outside their major fields of study.

As a new teacher, you may become a part of an ongoing debate about the value of standards. Let's listen to what some teachers say about their beliefs about standards and use of standards.

My name is Amanda Weiss and I am a second year teacher. I believe that standards are a wonderful tool for any teacher regardless of his or her experience level. As a second year teacher I feel that the standards helped me to discern what I should focus on in my classroom. I treat them as the skeleton upon which I con add muscle and fat to beef up the content and give my students a greater understanding. Do I think that teachers can be effective without standards? Yes, but I feel that standards help ensure that we are all on the same page and our students are receiving equal education no matter to which classroom they are assigned.	AMANDA WEISS
I am Beth Jones. As a ninth grade English teacher, I am constantly aware of the standards, not in the sense of an end-of-the-year assessment. I know there is a lot I must teach to prepare my students for 10th grade English and their for future Standards of Learning assessments. Everyday in my classroom, I attempt to address a wide range of English skills: to include reading, writing, oral communication, and grammar.

Along the same lines, the standards help guide my lesson planning and pacing. As a first year teacher, this is actually quite helpful. At times, I feel overwhelmed with planning because of the extensive lessons I could teach as an English teacher. Compared to other subjects like Chemistry, Geometry, or Physics, I do not follow a textbook or a set of concrete theories that must be mastered in systematic order. In the English classroom, we must develop writing, reading, and speaking skills. There are a multitude of approaches to develop these skills and no step-by-step procedure. Thus, the Standards of Learning, and more specifically, a scope and sequence guide, really help me decide what I should focus on in my classroom. | BETH JONES |

Quite possibly after I have taught for a few years, I will not feel the same way about the standards, and I might like to extend my curriculum outside of the guidelines offered to me. On the other hand, the English standards ARE open-ended naturally. I feel they always allow an English teacher room to try new things and to approach a lesson in a novel way. The debate about standards will continue. But, in reality, if we don't have goals for young people and ourselves, we will never have any idea about whether or not they have been attained.	DR. BOSHER

📁 PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Ask yourself: What resources do you use to align your instruction with learning targets? How do you know if your student's are successful? How do you communicate information about the standards with students, families, and colleagues?

Suggested use for this module:

1. Analyze:

Please select one of the scenarios below and problem-solve a list of possible solutions. Record your ideas in the space provided. Discuss these ideas with your other educators (mentor, colleagues, or other beginning teachers).

2. View:

Watch the corresponding video on this topic. How does this information change your ideas?

3. Compare:

Revisit the scenario selected. Next, review the section entitled, "Possible Solutions" comparing the ideas listed with your own list.

4. Reflect:

How will you apply this new information to your current or future classroom? What goal will you set to help you begin to change your practices? What support is needed to help you accomplish this goal?

5. Apply:

List the first step towards change in the space below. Create a timeline for success and place deadlines in your personal planner as a reminder. How will you know when you have met your goals?

Scenarios 1 & 2: Standards of Learning

Scenario 1:

Ms. Canton is a new teacher to the State of Virginia. She recently moved here from another state. She has been noticing that students are struggling with the content area vocabulary she has been teaching. In her inclusive classroom, she is uncertain which vocabulary terms within her teaching unit are really necessary for the students to master. Also, she worries about how much she has covered at this point in year and is concerned about how much depth she should provide in her lessons. What resources should she visit to alleviate these concerns?

Scenario 2:

Mrs. Wang is a beginning teacher who is seeking guidance on what essential content she should be teaching in her history classes. There is so much critical information to teach in World History and Geography and she if feeling lost about how to begin teaching her standards. She wonders what she should focus on when teaching the ancient river valley civilizations such as Egypt and China.   What resources should she visit for support?

<p align="center">Circle the scenario that you selected below:</p>

<p align="center">Scenario 1   Scenario 2</p>

Record a list of your own possible solutions here:

Summary & Goal Setting:

<p align="center">**POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:**</p>

Standards of Learning (SOL's)

The SOL's in Virginia designate the expectations for all students in each subject area (English, mathematics, history, science, technology, art, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education). To access the standards for your subject area, visit the following website:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml
Use the pull down menu to select your grade and subject areas. New teachers may also want to view the expectations for the grades above and below your teaching level after becoming familiar with your own standards. This information will provide you with a context or scaffold for the specific content that you are teaching.

Curriculum Framework

The Curriculum Framework is available for the four core subject areas (English, History, Mathematics, and Science). This supplemental document provides guidance for new teachers on which information should be taught for each Standard of Learning. The document includes teacher notes on understanding the standard, essential understandings for students, and a bulleted list of the knowledge, skills, and processes needed to be successful with each standard. To access the Curriculum Framework, please visit the Virginia Department of Education website at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/CurriculumFramework/

Enhanced Scope and Sequence

The Enhanced Scope and Sequence includes example lesson plans and resources for instruction in the four core subject areas (English, History, Mathematics, and Science).
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/EnhancedSandS/

Enhanced Scope and Sequence PLUS

This website includes lesson plans with useful strategies for differentiating learning for all students in the classroom. The lesson plans at this site include connections for meeting the needs of all learners including the following areas:

- Technology connections

- Multi-sensory information

- Community connections

- Small group instruction

- Vocabulary strategies

- Organizing content for students

http://www.ttaconline.org/staff/sol/sol.asp

Once you are on the Training & Technical Assistance Center website, click your area of the state. Next, select the 'SOL Enhanced' tab at the top of the page. Use the drop-down menu on the side of the screen to access your content area or standard. Visiting this website will help you incorporate research-based teaching practices into your lesson plans.   The site is especially helpful for working with students with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency (LEP).

Other Curricular Resources

New teachers may also want to visit the VDOE website http://www.doe.virginia.gov/ to access testing blueprints (weighting of test items) as well as sample released SOL questions from testing administrations administered in previous years. Additionally, beginning teachers should meet with their mentors to find out what school division resources are available for instructional planning. School division resources vary by locality, but typically include items such as Pacing Guides, Curriculum Documents, Professional Resources (books, websites, and training materials), and Assessment Materials.

❖ The results indicate that most teachers reported using the results to make instructional and assessment changes, especially those who emphasized depth of learning and higher-level cognition. Greater collaboration among teachers was reported, as well as more formative classroom assessment. Elementary teachers changed more than secondary teachers. Small to moderate effect sizes suggest important impacts on a moderate number of teachers that are more positive than previously reported for high-stakes minimum competency testing.

McMillan, James H. (2005). *The Impact of high-stakes test results on teachers; instructional and classroom assessment practices*. Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium, Virginia Commonwealth University.

❖ School leaders need to understand the very real demands of standards-based instruction. They must also understand their own role in ensuring that every classroom teacher is prepared to meet these demands

Jamentz, Kate. (2002). *Isolation is the enemy of improvement: instructional leadership to support standards-based practice*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 46944)

❖ To ensure that every student achieves high standards, teachers must, themselves, understand the standards – and that means having a clear vision of what achievement of each particular student would look like.

Jamentz, Kate. (2002). *Isolation is the enemy of improvement: instructional leadership to support standards-based practice*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 46944)

❖ High-stakes tests may encourage teachers to provide more depth in teaching subjects, to focus more on higher level cognition, to use more formative assessments, and to use more individualized and small group instruction, rather than to emphasize rote learning, direct teaching for English, science, and mathematics, and whole class instruction.

McMillan, James H. (2005). *The Impact of high-stakes test results on teachers; instructional and classroom assessment practices*. Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium, Virginia Commonwealth University.

❖ The means of achieving the standards may vary greatly within and across classrooms. In standards-based systems, teachers must develop a repertoire of differentiated strategies for meeting the variety of learning needs represented among various groups of students.

Jamentz, Kate. (2002). *Isolation is the enemy of improvement: instructional leadership to support standards-based practice*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 46944)

- ❖ Effective standards-based instructional practice requires that teachers

  - Work effectively as part of a team
  - Use data to guide instruction
  - Collect accurate data on student performance
  - Align instructions to standards
  - Communicate standards for student performance to parents and students, and help students assess their own progress in relation to these standards
  - Understand expectations for student performance

  Jamentz, Kate. (2002). *Isolation is the enemy of improvement: instructional leadership to support standards-based practice*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 46944)

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